



# Water Quality NewsFlash

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**Construction General Permit – State grappling with major issues** – The current *General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity* (CGP) was issued in 1999. Subsequently, it was challenged by environmental groups which led to changes in the monitoring provisions. Currently, State Board staff revising the CGP are attempting to address several difficult issues:

1. To what extent should numeric limits, thresholds, or other “quantifiable measures” be included in the permit. Last year, the Board convened a Blue Ribbon Panel of outside experts to address this issue. (See *NewsFlash* 05-31)
2. How the permit should deal with recent court decisions requiring that NPDES permits have greater agency and public involvement with the permits’ substantive requirements. Currently, discharger-prepared stormwater pollution prevention plans (SWPPP) contain the detailed description of a project’s runoff control program but the SWPPPs are not subject to prior agency or public review. (See *NewsFlash* 05-39)

The State Board may issue a new draft CGP in as soon as 3 months. The Caltrans statewide permit regulates Caltrans construction projects, however, Caltrans follows the technical requirements of the CGP. Current CGP:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/stormwtr/gen\\_const.html#const\\_permit](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/stormwtr/gen_const.html#const_permit)

## **Highway Stormwater Management – Webcasts focus on low impact design**

– The Izaak Walton League, with funding from the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. EPA and others will present a four-part Webcast series on *Alternative Practices for Highway Stormwater Management*. The broadcasts are each 1 ½ hrs long and are intended help highway department personnel manage stormwater quantity and quality while using existing rights of way and providing easy access for maintenance crews. The first broadcast is May 18, prior sign-up is required. <http://www.iwla.org/index.php?id=169>

**Hypoxia – Similar impacts to environmental hormones** – In recent years, the water community has become increasingly concerned about the effects of hormonally active pollutants, also known as endocrine disrupting compounds. These pollutants can change the sexual characteristics of fish and other organisms. (The U.S. EPA has an effort underway to identify pollutants with hormonal effects – see: <http://www.epa.gov/scipoly/oscpendo/index.htm> ). Recent research, however, is showing that waters with limited oxygen – hypoxia – can also significantly alter the sexual characteristics of fish: <http://enn.com/today.html?id=10165> .

Waters with low oxygen are increasing around the world due to increasing volumes of wastewater carrying organic material and nutrients. Water quality testing for BOD<sub>5</sub> – biochemical oxygen demand, 5-day – can measure the near-term oxygen demand that results from the breakdown of organic wastewater constituents by bacteria. Storm water runoff is generally relatively low in BOD<sub>5</sub> but may carry nutrients and debris that may also contribute to oxygen depletion.

WQ NewsFlash is a weekly update of storm water and related news for the Department. *Verify information before taking action on these bulletins.* Contact Betty Sanchez, [Betty\\_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Betty_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov) (916) 653-2115, or Fred Krieger, (510) 843-7889, [fkrieger@msn.com](mailto:fkrieger@msn.com) with questions or to be added or deleted from e-mail list. Posted online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/publicat/newsflash/index.htm>